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-1952-

THE RURAL DISTRICT

OF

ST. AUSTELL



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

To the Chairman and Councillors
of the Rural District of St. Austell.

Mr.Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the
Health and Sanitary Circumstances of the District for the
year 1952.

The conditions prevailing have been very satisfactory
with a low death rate, and a relative absence of acute
infectious disease.

I am indebted to Mr. Lawless, the Chief Sanitary
Inspector and to Mr.Townsend, the Council's Engineer for
considerable portions of this Report.

I wish to thank Mr. Mitchell and the Heads of
Departments and their Staffs for help and co-operation.

It is a pleasure to record gratitude to the Chairman
and Members of the Public Health Committee for their
continued interest and support.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient Servant,

JAMES TURNER.

SECTION A.

Natural and Social Conditions of the Area

Area (in acres)	82,389
Population (Mid-year 1952) (Estimated)	22,110
Number of inhabited houses	6,318
Rateable value	87,208
Product of a penny rate	£34.9

The increase of 1,640 in the population is most probably due to service personnel. As elsewhere in Cornwall there is a marked seasonal rise during the holiday period. The main occupations are clayworking and agriculture. Both are healthy and the former is not associated with any industrial disease.

The district extends across the breadth of the County and has a northern and southern seaboard. As a result there are two types of climate - the northern, more bracing with slightly more sunshine and a slightly lower temperature than the southern, which is mild with prevailing S.W. winds. The mean annual temperature is about 51° F.

Rainfall. The rainfall recorded for the year amounted to 47.37 inches, precipitation occurring on 213 days. The maximum daily fall was 1.63 inches on 12th October, whilst October was the wettest month with 6.92 inches. June was again the driest month with 1.36 inches.

The information is based on records kept at Hendra Pumping Station.

Summary of Vital Statistics

<u>Live Births</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Rate/1000 Population</u>	
				<u>Rural Dist.</u>	<u>England & Wales</u>
Legitimate	160	166)			
Illegitimate	11	7)	344	15.5	

For comparison with other areas rate
corrected for age and sex distribution 15.97 15.3

Still Births

Legitimate	2	3)			
Illegitimate	1	0)	6	0.27	0.35

<u>Deaths</u>	118	109	227	10.25	
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For comparison with other areas rate
corrected for age and sex distribution 8.92 11.3

<u>Deaths under 1 yr. of age - Infant Mortality</u>				<u>Rate/1000 Live Births</u>	
Legitimate	3	3			
Illegitimate	0	0	6	17.45	27.6

<u>Maternal Mortality</u>	<u>Rate/1000 Total Births</u>	
	0	0.72

<u>Deaths from Enteritis and Diarrhoea Under 2 yrs. of age</u>	<u>Rate/1000 Live Births</u>	
	0	1.1

The rates shown above are very favourable compared with those for the whole country, but it is wise to remember that with the relatively small numbers being considered wide fluctuations are possible.

The following table gives the causes of infant deaths:-

Cause	Under 1 week	2	3	4	5 weeks to 12 months	Total
Cerebral haemorrhage	1	-	-	-	-	1
Prematurity	-	1	-	-	-	1
Bronchopneumonia	-	-	-	-	1	1
Congenital deformity	-	1	-	-	-	1
Asphyxia	2	-	-	-	-	2
	3	2	0	0	1	6

These figures represent a considerable improvement over those for last year and with present knowledge only one of these deaths may be considered preventable.

The following is an abbreviated list of the causes of death of persons of all ages:-

	M.	F.
1) Tuberculosis, resp:	1	2
2) Syphilitic disease	1	1
3) Other infective & parasitic diseases	-	1
4) Malig: neoplasm, stomach	1	1
5) " " lung, bronchus	2	1
6) " " breast	-	1
7) " " uterus	-	2
8) Other Malig: & lymphatic neoplasms	11	9
9) Leukaemia, aleukaemia	2	3
10) Diabetes	1	2
11) Vascular lesions of nervous system	17	22
12) Coronary disease, angina	17	11
13) Hypertension with heart disease	4	3
14) Other heart disease	18	28
15) Other circulatory disease	1	7
16) Influenza	3	0
17) Pneumonia	5	1
18) Bronchitis	6	-
19) Other diseases, resp. system	1	-
20) Nephritis and nephrosis	2	3
21) Hyperplasia of prostate	2	-
22) Congenital malformations	1	1
23) Other defined & ill-defined dis.	15	9
24) Motor vehicle accidents	2	-
25) All other accidents	5	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>
All causes	<u>118</u>	<u>109</u>

Malignant disease caused 14.5% of all deaths, motor vehicles and other accidents 3.5%.

The following short table gives the percentage distribution of ages at death:-

<u>Age Group (years)</u>	<u>Males %</u>	<u>Females %</u>
0 - 1	2.5	2.8
1 - 59	22.7	16.8
60 - 69	19.3	19.6
70 - 79	33.6	31.7
80 - 89	20.2	18.7
90 plus	1.7	10.3

The table shows the greater longevity of females at higher ages.

SECTION B.

Public Health Officers of the Local Authority

(a) Medical Officer of Health

J.G.S.Turner, M.B., D.P.H. 1st Jan. - 31st Dec.

(b) Sanitary Inspectors (whole time)

H.G.Lawless, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A., Food Inspectors' Certificate.
T.J.Down, A.R.S.I.

Laboratory Facilities

These are available at the Royal Cornwall Infirmary, Truro, where all material for investigation is sent.

Diphtheria Prophylaxis

In addition to the supplies of diphtheria prophylactic previously available supplies of whooping cough vaccine both alone and combined with that for diphtheria are available at the Health Area Office, St.Austell, and can be obtained by Medical Practitioners on request.

Ambulance Facilities

These are provided from the main centres at St. Austell and Newquay and in addition from country centres at Indian Queens, St.Dennis and St.Blazey. The Red Cross Ambulance stationed at St.Dennis ceased to operate in November 1952. It will not be replaced. The work carried out from the above centres during the year is shown in the following tables. About one-third of the patients carried belonged to the Rural District.

(a) Ambulances

	<u>Patients</u>	<u>Miles</u>
Newquay	1,284	18,178
St.Austell	2,607	44,809

(b) Utilicars

Newquay	1,713	24,643
St.Austell	9,975	78,334

(c) Hospital Car Service

Newquay	1,436	17,629
St.Austell	2,173	19,463

(d) County Centre Ambulances

St.Dennis	58	1,883
Indian Queens	232	5,747
St.Blazey	205	6,670

Thanks are due to the voluntary organisations who helped, to Mrs. Batchelor and Mrs.Bellingham, Organisers of the Hospital Car Service, and to many ladies and gentlemen who provided transport on request.

Nursing Services

The establishment of nurses who carry out domiciliary services is as follows:-

District Nurse - Midwife - Health	11
Whole-time Health Visitor	1

Some adjustments in the district boundaries are necessary. The services provided have worked smoothly.

Domiciliary Midwifery

All nurses are now trained in the use of gas/air anaesthesia and this is available to all patients.

Ante-Natal Care

There are no ante-natal clinics in the rural area and all pregnant women are referred either to St. Austell or to Newquay.

Infant Welfare

The new centre at Roche has continued to be very successful with an average attendance of 16. The scattered population and poor transport facilities have precluded the establishment of centres elsewhere.

Care and After Care

Two cases of tuberculosis were helped by grants from the County.

Young children on discharge from hospital are followed up by the district nurses.

Domestic Help Service

This service has worked well, but difficulty has been experienced during the summer months in obtaining spare-time helps, and there is still great difficulty in obtaining help for cases of tuberculosis. At the end of the year the establishment was increased to the equivalent of seven full-time helps.

Thanks are due to Miss Stokes and to the ladies who assist her in organising this service. A total of 31 persons of whom 8 were maternity cases were given help.

Hospitals

There is no hospital in the district and cases are sent to Newquay, Fowey and St. Austell District Hospitals, to the R.C.I. at Truro for special investigations and treatment, to Redruth in the case of maternity and to the Isolation Hospital at Truro in the case of infectious disease.

Clinics

The following clinics are held at the places and dates indicated:-

Child Welfare	(St. Austell - Moorland Road - 1st and 3rd Wednesday Newquay - Ambulance Hall - Weekly - Thursday Par - Gott Hall - 2nd and 4th Tuesday Roche - Church Hall - Monthly
Ante-Natal	(St. Austell - Moorland Road - Weekly - Monday forenoon Newquay - Hospital - Weekly - Monday afternoon
Orthopaedic	(St. Austell - Moorland Road - Weekly - Tuesday forenoon Newquay - Hospital - Weekly - Monday

Tuberculosis	(St.Austell - Hospital - Weekly - Monday Newquay - Hospital - 1st, 3rd and 5th Tuesday)
Tuberculosis (Contacts)	(St.Austell - 1st Monday and last Tuesday (afternoon) Newquay - 3rd Tuesday (afternoon)
Dental	(St.Austell - Moorland Road - every day Newquay - Berry Road - Thrice weekly)
Opthalmic	(St.Austell - Aylmer Place - 2nd and 4th Wednesday Newquay - Hospital - by arrangement)
E.N.T.	(St.Austell - Moorland Road - by arrangement Newquay - Hospital - by arrangement)

SECTION C.

Sanitary Conditions of the District

(1) Water (i) New Construction

(a) St.Mawgan & Trenance Water Scheme

The work on this scheme, which was started in April 1950, was completed in June 1952 and the scheme is operating satisfactorily. Properties taking water from the mains include 112 dwellings, 12 farms and 10 miscellaneous connections.

(b) Queens, Fraddon, Summercourt Water Scheme

Work on this scheme continued throughout the year, progress being such that by the end of the year the main laying had reached the village of Summercourt. Again, the majority of properties adjacent to the mains are taking a supply of water as the work proceeds.

(c) Lower Sticker Farms Extension

This scheme was carried out during the Spring and Summer and is operating satisfactorily.

(d) Talskiddy Water Supply

Ministerial approval to this scheme having been obtained, orders were placed for the supply of pipes and fittings, but owing to delays in deliveries, it is not expected that work will begin until late in 1953.

(ii) Existing Schemes

(a) Water Samples

During the year 178 samples of water from various public supplies were submitted for analysis with the following results:-

Satisfactory	166
Unsatisfactory	<u>12</u>
Total	<u><u>178</u></u>

In general the unsatisfactory results were obtained from village wells where control of quality is impracticable. In these cases, notices were exhibited warning consumers to boil the water before use.

In addition to the above, 8 private supplies have been sampled with the following results:-

Satisfactory	2
Slightly contaminated	3
Unsafe for drinking purposes	3

(b) Water Shortages

During the summer, water shortages were experienced which necessitated restrictions on the use of water for watering gardens, washing vehicles and similar purposes. In the parishes of St. Mewan and St. Sampson and at Grampound full supplies could not be maintained and for a period of about two months water was rationed.

(2) Sewerage

(i) New Constructions

The only new construction carried out during the year was at Gorran Churchtown where a short length of sewer was laid to obviate a nuisance caused by the discharge of sewage into an open ditch adjacent to dwelling houses.

(ii) Existing Works

An improvement in the standard of the effluents from existing disposal works has been achieved as a result of a reorganisation of the maintenance methods. The majority of effluents are, however, still unsatisfactory. A survey is shortly to be conducted to determine what works are necessary to ensure the production of satisfactory effluents.

(iii) Cesspool Emptying

The work of this vehicle during the year has included the emptying of 178 privately owned cesspools, together with those on various Council housing estates, and assistance in desludging tanks at the Sewage Disposal Works.

Requests for the assistance of this vehicle have been made by neighbouring Authorities, from time to time, and in so far as it was possible, such requests have been met.

(3) Disinfections

The normal terminal disinfections were carried out as and when required after cases of infectious diseases.

(4) Disinfestations

A few disinfestations were carried out, often after the vacation of a house. The incoming tenant has usually asked for the disinfestation to be done.

(5) Rodent Control

The whole of the rodent work in the area was dealt with by one operator using a 10 cwt. truck. He has been responsible for the baiting and killing of rats and mice, together with survey of villages and inspection of farms for the presence of rats. He also transports materials to the Council's housing maintenance workmen, and carries out disinfections or disinfestations.

Treatments carried out during the year are as listed below:-

Domestic	1,754
Trade Premises	214
Authorities Refuse Tips	
and Sewage Works	56
Block Controls	65
Villages surveyed	46
Farms inspected	135

(6) Nuisances

A complaint was received from various householders in the village of Treviscoe that the vegetation in their gardens was blighted, that their windows were etched on the outside, and that granite walls and roof slates looked as if they had been sand blasted. The nuisance was found to exist to windward of a high temperature clay calciner whose exhaust fumes were liberated at a height of about 12 ft. a few hundred yards distant.

No damage to the health of the people could be detected and a dental surgeon found the teeth of children to be normal. A bird fancier stated that he had lost several canaries. The major damage was to vegetation and the people suffered only from their failure to grow green vegetables. There was a marked differential effect upon vegetation, broad leaved plants being most affected.

It was suspected at first that the damage might be due to fluorine, but assurance was given by the Clay Company's Chemists that none could be detected in the exhaust gases, and that there was none in the raw materials, but that there was a high content of sulphur dioxide, due probably to the sulphur in the fuel oil which was used to produce the high temperatures. An acrid sulphurous smell could be detected at times.

A sheet of damaged glass was sent to the manufacturers who provided a comprehensive report on the glass. They confirmed that the damage was not due to fluorine and stated that repeated wetting and drying of dilute solutions of sulphurous acid was the probable cause of the etching.

The China Clay Company undertook to pass the flue gases up a tall chimney which was adjacent and recent inspections (June 1953) indicate that this has largely solved the trouble. The matter is being kept under review.

(7) Public Cleansing and Refuse Disposal

This work comes under the supervision of the Public Health Department. Three vehicles are used carrying a driver and a loader. A weekly collection of refuse is made in most parts of the district. The remainder which is sparsely populated has a monthly collection only.

Most of the refuse is disposed of at the Terras Dump, but three other dumps are in existence. The one at Grampound will soon be filled and an alternative one situated at Sticker will be put into operation. The other two, at Rescassa and Bryn, can only be used during the dry weather owing to poor access over soft ground.

(8) Public Conveniences

There are seven Public Conveniences in the area, and they are under the supervision of the Public Health Department. They are situated in St. Stephen, St. Dennis, St. Columb and Gorran parishes.

The Council is considering the erection of additional Conveniences.

SECTION D

Housing

The Council now owns a total of 588 houses. This includes 237 erected pre-war. There has been a decrease in the demand for Council houses, and the completion and occupation of the 68 houses on the St. Columb Road site has considerably eased the situation in the St. Columb parish. The number on the waiting list stands at 291. The following is an analysis of the above applications :-

(1) Number without separate houses	161
(2) Number with separate houses living in	
(a) unfit houses	54
(b) overcrowded conditions	42
(3) Number of unmarried persons	23
(4) Number requiring houses for various other reasons	11

Applications are renewable every six months, and consideration is given to reports made by the Public Health Department on the living conditions, etc., of the applicants when houses come up for letting before the Housing Committee.

The types of houses required by the above applicants are as follows:-

1 Bedroom	2
2 "	116
3 "	153
4 "	4
Unclassified	16

Private Enterprise Building

There was a total of 11 houses and bungalows completed by private enterprise builders in the district.

Houses built by the Council

(i) Site preparation works

(a) Creakavose, St. Stephen

The construction of roads, sewers and watermain on a site to accommodate approximately 70 houses was carried out between May and November, but surfacing works have been postponed until the houses are erected.

(b) St. Columb Road Estate

The road and footpaths on this estate were surfaced before the end of the summer. Only a few minor items require attention before the estate can be considered complete.

(c) Extension of Highfield Avenue, St. Columb Major

Plans are in course of preparation for this development, and site works should be started during the summer of 1953.

(ii) Non-traditional houses (Cornish Units)

(a) St. Columb Road Estate

The erection of 52 three-bedroom houses, 4 four-bedroom houses and 12 2-bedroom flats were completed during the year, the last dwelling being occupied early in October.

(b) Trelowth Estate

A start having been made in June, the erection of 8 two-bedroom and 2 three-bedroom houses was well advanced by the end of the year and occupations should take place early in 1953.

(c) St. Dennis Estate

The 2 three-bedroomed houses begun in February were completed and occupied in July.

(d) St. Stephen Estate

The four 3-bedroomed houses begun in February were completed and occupied in July.

(iii) Traditional Houses

(a) The only houses completed during the year were those begun in 1951, being the four 3-bedroomed houses at St. Ewe and two 2-bedroomed bungalows for Aged Persons at Nanpean.

(b) Following the Council's decision to adopt the policy of building smaller, cheaper houses, designs were prepared and tenders invited for the erection of the following:-

- 53 - 2-bed. and 11 3-bed. houses at Creakavose, St. Stephen.
- 7 - 2-bed. and 1 3-bed. houses at Coombe, St. Stephen.
- 3 - 2-bed. and 1 3-bed. houses at Carloggas, St. Mawgan.
- 8 - 2-bed. houses at Highfield Avenue, St. Columb Major.
- 2 - 2-bed. houses at Harmony Place, Roche.

In addition, plans were prepared for a further 8 houses at Roche, but protracted negotiations for the purchase of the necessary land have impeded further progress.

By the end of the year, the houses of these types under construction included 40 at Creakavose, St. Stephen and 4 at Carloggas, St. Mawgan. It is expected that a start will be made on the erection of the remaining houses early in 1953.

(iv) Summary of Housing Progress

The above information may be summarised as follows:-

Dwellings completed in 1952	80 No.	(All types)
Dwellings commenced but not completed in 1952	54 "	do.
Dwellings under approved tenders but not commenced in 1952	42 "	do.

SECTION E

Inspection and Supervision of Food

Milk

Most of the retailers in the district sell bottled milk. Three Renewal Licences have been issued for the bottling of Tuberculin Tested milk and two licences for the bottling of Pasteurised milk. These retailers, being non-producers, obtain their milk from various sources which are licensed in their own areas.

Ice Cream

The number of premises registered for the sale of Ice Cream has increased considerably, the total of registered premises now being 69. The increase during the past two years has been brought about by the popularity of pre-packed ice cream which is distributed promptly and regularly, is easy to serve to the customer and requires only a simple form of cabinet container. The present method of marketing and the strict bacteriological control at the factory makes it unnecessary for the product to be sample locally.

Meat Inspection

All the meat inspection at the only Ministry of Food Slaughterhouse

in the area at Lane is carried out by the Sanitary Inspector of Newquay. This arrangement was arrived at owing to the proximity of the slaughterhouse to Newquay and the fact that most of the meat is distributed in the Newquay area. This arrangement saves a considerable amount of travelling by this Council's Sanitary Inspector. The state of the Lane Slaughterhouse is not at all satisfactory and very strong representations have been made to the Ministry of Food for improvements to be made. It seems likely that some work will be done in the ensuing year.

Meat inspection at the Tregonissey Slaughterhouse is still being shared with the St.Austell Urban Inspectors at the ratio of one week in three. It is expected that the Ministry will shortly effect some necessary improvements here also.

Tinned Food

A few tins of imported ham and other meats together with some tins of fruit have been condemned as being unfit for human consumption.

SECTION F

Prevalence of and control over infections and other diseases

The following notifications of infectious diseases were received:-

Disease	1952 No. of cases	Rate per 1000 population		
		St.Austell 1951	Rural 1952	England & Wales 1952
Whooping cough	9	6.46	0.41	2.61
Scarlet fever	9	0.78	0.41	1.53
Pneumonia	2	0.29	0.09	0.72
Cerebro-spinal fever	1	0.05	0.04	0.03
Acute encephalitis	1	-	0.04	-
Measles	4	16.27	0.18	8.86
Poliomyelitis (paralytic)	1	0.29	0.04	0.06

It proved impossible to trace the origin of the infection in the case of poliomyelitis, but it probably was the caravan site beside which the child lived and where he, at times, played.

There was a remarkable freedom from all the common infections.

Diphtheria Immunisation

The following table gives the number of children who had completed a full course of immunisation up to 31st December 1952:-

Age at 31.12.52 i.e. born in year	- 1 1952	1 1951	2 1950	3 1949	4 1948	5 - 9 1943-47	10 - 14 1938-42	Total under 15 years
No. immunised	11	112	147	137	136	728	466	1737
Estimated mid- year population			1660			2742		4402
Percentage immunised			32.6			43.5		39.5

During the year 302 primary immunisations were carried out and 446 boosting doses given to school children.

There has been little improvement in the immune state of the child population. The Chief Medical Officer of the Ministry of Health

considers that a safe level is 75% and we are only halfway. The disturbing feature is that the level is lower in the 0 - 5 age group than in those aged 5 years and over. It cannot be too clearly stated that diphtheria still kills and that the conditions are being created now for this disease to become epidemic once again.

Smallpox Vaccination

95 primary vaccinations and 12 re-vaccinations were carried out during the year. The vaccinal state of the community is very low.

Tuberculosis

The number of cases on the register at the 31st December 1952 was as follows:-

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Pulmonary	67	37	104
Non-Pulmonary	10	8	18

The following table gives the age and sex distribution of new cases and deaths for the year 1952. Deaths in this table include all notified cases who may have died from other causes.

Age Group	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0 - 4								
5 - 9				1				
10 - 14								
15 - 19	1							
20 - 24		2						
25 - 34	3							
35 - 44	2				1			
45 - 54	2					2		
55 - 64	1							
65 - 74	1				1	1		
Over 75								
Total	10	2		1	2	3		

In addition to the above the following alterations to the register were made:-

	<u>Pulmonary</u>		<u>Non-pulmonary</u>	
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Transfers - in	5	4		
do - out	6	5		
Recoveries	1	-	8	3

An effort is being made to deal with the tuberculosis problem from the public health point of view by the examination of contacts of acute cases. All those who, on examination, show no sign of previous infection, are offered B.C.G. vaccination. So far in the rural area 122 persons have been so protected.

Factories Acts, 1937 & 1948Part I

Premises (1)	M/c line No. (2)	No. on Register (3)	No. of Inspections (4)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	1	16	8
(ii) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	2	73	44
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	3	-	-
TOTAL		89	52

Cases in which DEFECTS were found

Particulars (1)	M/c line No. (2)	Number of cases in which defects were found			
		Found (3)	Remedied (4)	Referred	
				To H.M. Inspector (5)	By H.M. Inspector (6)
Want of cleanliness (S.I.)	4	2	2	-	-
TOTAL		2	2	-	-

There are no outworkers in the district.